

CLAIMS:

1. A method for preventing preterm labor in a pregnant subject comprising administering to the subject an amount of thiazolidinedione effective to prevent preterm labor in the subject.
2. A method for reducing an oxytocin-mediated action in a subject comprising administering to the subject an amount of thiazolidinedione effective to reduce the oxytocin-mediated action in the subject.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the oxytocin-mediated action is induction of labor in a pregnant subject.
4. The method of claim 2, wherein the oxytocin-mediated action is induction of uterine cramps.
5. The method of claim 2, wherein the oxytocin-mediated action is induction of milk letdown.
6. The method of claim 2, wherein the oxytocin-mediated action is induction of prostaglandin release.
7. The method of claim 2, wherein the subject is a mammal.
8. The method of claim 2, wherein the thiazolidinedione comprises troglitazone.

9. The method of claim 2, wherein the thiazolidinedione comprises pioglitazone, BRL49653, or a compound related to troglitazone.

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10. The method of claim 2, wherein the thiazolidinedione is dispersed in a pharmacologically acceptable form.

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11. The method of claim 10, wherein said thiazolidinedione is administered locally.

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12. The method of claim 10, wherein said thiazolidinedione is administered parenterally.

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13. The method of claim 12, wherein said thiazolidinedione is administered intravenously.

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14. The method of claim 11, wherein the thiazolidinedione is administered intravaginally.

15. The method of claim 3, further comprising administering a tocolytic agent.

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16. The method of claim 15, wherein said tocolytic agent comprises a beta-mimetic, magnesium sulfate, a prostaglandin inhibitor, or a calcium-blocking agent.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the prostaglandin inhibitor is indomethacin.
18. The method of claim 17, wherein the calcium-blocking agent is nifedipine.
19. The method of claim 15, wherein the tocolytic agent and thiazolidinedione are administered simultaneously.
20. A method of screening for an oxytocin agonist comprising administering a troglitazone-like compound to an oxytocin receptor and determining whether the compound binds the receptor.
21. A method of screening for an oxytocin antagonist comprising
- (a) administering a thiazolidinedione to an oxytocin receptor;
 - (b) administering a composition comprising a candidate oxytocin antagonist; and,
 - (c) determining whether the thiazolidinedione binds to the receptor.